

Title: Codex Maleficarum volume I (a)

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Renunciation of the Light

Sooner or later, the would-be Infernalist decides to curse the light. With a formal oath, he declares his hate to his former gods and tramples symbols of their power. Again, he does this of his own will; others might entice or threaten him to do it, but the oath must be made in a clear state of mind. Once it's done, the new Infernalist casts his lot with Darkness. He chooses his Word, and that word is NO.

If the quester hasn't already joined a coven or sect, this stage usually marks his initiation into one. This isn't a universal step; many Infernalists hate company and forswear even the most demented companions. But if a diabolist craves instruction and fellowship in sin, he has to renounce all goodness in his heart to enter. For Infernalists who grow up in degenerate tribes, this step is easy: what's to renounce? But for an initiate with some

semblance of normalcy, this ritual marks the point of no return.

Many initiates don't realize how large a step it is. In the hedonistic, irreverent climate of the society, some people join dark covens simply for the thrill of it. Fun or not, the renunciation is deadly serious to the demons that are inevitably paying attention. Anyone who seems like a worthy candidate for full-blown corruption is noted, approached, and very possibly enlisted among the armies of the damned.

The Cold Thrust

If awareness yields to Awakening, the initiate finds himself impaled on the icy horns - or more appropriately, phallus - of Enlightenment. For one who pursues the darkest Mysteries, this moment is a rape of the soul. Every fear, every doubt, every screaming terror the initiate has ever felt rips through him like a gutter's hook. At this moment, he stands at the edge of Hell and gets a taste of it. The experience isn't pleasant.

Some sects, induce this moment with harsh rituals. After the Infernalist has sworn his loyalty, the other officiants beat and otherwise torment

him until he either
snaps into Awakening,
becomes a gibbering
wreck or falls
unconsciousness.

It may be a prelude
to a wondrous career,
but the Cold Thrust is
allways torturous. It
literally scars the
soul, tears it open on a
spiritual level. No
matter what the
diabolist does, this
moment will haunt
him like no other.
Some initiates snap
forever at this point
and become demented.
Some even die from
the shock. Those who
endure with their
wits intact becom the
most dangerous kind
of magi: Those who
have gone to Hell and
returned.